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SEPTEMBER 23



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ISSUE
212
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Celebrating The Next Generation

After a very busy August for the town, September feels like the start of a new chapter, with the schools going back, the seasons changing and the long evenings becoming shorter. It's been particularly lovely this month to hear about the many achievements of the younger members of our community and I hope you will join me in congratulating them. We were especially delighted to be invited to join students from Thetford Academy as they received their exam results this year and to feature some of the successful A Level students on our front cover this month.

Heritage Open Days (HODS) return again this month and Thetford always has a great selection of activities to choose from. This year is no different with everything from talks and tours to live music to enjoy. Thetford has such a rich, diverse history and we should all be proud to be part of it. Talking of being proud of where you live, there's a good number of community litter picks you can support with more details on page 14. Younger members of the community and family groups are always welcome to join in.

Karen-Emma White,
Assistant Editor, About Thetford magazine

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Search On For Honoured Citizen

Do you know someone that goes above and beyond to support their local community? Or perhaps you have a neighbour that you think deserves to be recognised for helping others. If so, Thetford Town Council want to hear from you as the search for this year's Honoured Citizen is now on.

The Honoured Citizen Award is a tribute to a local person, awarded by the Town Council and aims to recognise people who have undertaken outstanding service to the local community. Any resident of Thetford may be nominated for the award, although residents outside of the Town Council's area may also be considered. Nominations should be submitted using the application form available on the Council's website and each nominee needs to be proposed and seconded by two Thetford residents.



Paul Welham receiving his award from former Mayor Councillor Mike Brindle (@Thetford Photography)

Councillor Mike Brindle, Chairman of the Heritage And Events Committee said; "We are fortunate in Thetford that there are so many people doing really great things to support their neighbours and wider community. Often people do this good work completely under the radar and the point of the Honoured Citizen Award is to shine a light on such people to thank them for their service".

The winner in 2021 was Paul Welham, nominated for his work with numerous local groups including Doves Nest Ministries. He said "It was totally unexpected and it was a real privilege to be recognised as being a part of the amazing community which is Thetford where lots of people, churches and groups work together to meet people's needs".

The deadline for nominations is 20th September 2023. For more information contact 01842 754247 or visit: www.thetfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

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Meeting starts at 7pm

Large Court, Thetford Guildhall
Market Place IP24 2DS

An opportunity to bring your concerns to the notice of STAG and the Police, towards setting Police priorities and STAG actions for our town



Explore Your Local Heritage

Heritage Open Days (HODs) is England's largest festival of history and culture, running from Friday 8th until Sunday 17th September. It gives everyone free access to experiences and events where you can explore heritage sites and learn more about the cultural heritage in our communities. Many events are drop-in and you can just turn up on the day, although due to limited capacity, some events must be booked in advance. This year's festival theme is *Creativity Unwrapped* so alongside guided tours and open days expect events and activities celebrating England's colourful history of creativity.

Across Thetford there are a large number of events, including *Made by the River* at Ancient House Museum on both Saturdays where you can meet costumed characters and find out about all the industries that grew up along the rivers in the town and enjoy some crafts. You can also meet more costumed characters at the museum on Saturday 16th September and discover Thetford's links to the Duleep Family. Thetford Town Council are hosting a number of activities across the festival from displaying the town regalia in King's House to a Regency lunchtime concert in the Guildhall, along with Crime and Punishment Tours and a weekend of performances in the Market Place on the final weekend.

Leaping Hare will be hosting activities at their Everything Thetford Information Centre and shop including their ever popular Coin Striking activity and new for this year is *The Flintknappers' Garden* – discover what happened when four ladies from Thetford decided to enter a community garden at RHS Hampton Court Flower Show, alongside a



Visit Michael The Moneyer and get your own special edition Thetford minted coin

local makers showcase featuring garden themed makes. The annual *Former Atomic Weapon Bunker Tours* at Gorse Industrial Estate, Barnham return on 10th and 11th September, advanced booking only due to limited spaces. The museums across town will be open making this the ideal time to explore Thetford's rich and varied heritage offering.

For more information and booking details for all Thetford events and activities please go to:

www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting/printable-area-lists/town/Thetford

Monksgate Yard Sale



Saturday September 9th
10am - 1pm

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Thetford's Stage And Screen 2023 Ends In Shakespearean Triumph

The Thetford Stage and Screen 2023 Festival has concluded its programme with resounding success, captivating thousands of audience members with a remarkable blend of classic films, street food and enchanting live outdoor theatre performances. The festival finale took place on Wednesday 23rd August and saw a spellbound audience enjoying picnics on a summer's evening within Thetford Priory, whilst watching the classic Shakespeare's *'A Midsummer Night's Dream'*. The evening before, the unique venue played host to Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.



The festival also included two days of nostalgic cinema, featuring the time-travel adventure of *'Back to the Future'*, the award-winning *'Matilda The Musical'* and the heartwarming Polynesian voyage of *'Moana'*. The outside cinema was held at the Thetford Riverside and showcased a variety of local and regional street food vendors, including Thetford's Puddin and Norfolk's Dabbawalla Indian street food.

Breckland Council funded the Stage and Screen Summer 2023 programme, in partnership with Thetford Town Council, to bring together local communities, attract visitors to the town and support local businesses. The organisers estimate around 1,600 people attended events held across the festival.

"I am delighted by the brilliant response to the festival and the boost it has given the town and its residents," commented Cllr Paul Claussen,

Executive Member for Economic and Growth at Breckland Council. "This year's festival aimed to celebrate the rich tapestry of cinema and theatre and showcase Thetford's history. Despite some challenging weather early on in the festival, it didn't dampen anybody's spirits and the overwhelming response has been fantastic."

Breckland Councillor for Thetford Priory Ward Terry Jermy added; "I'd like to thank everyone that helped to put on a superb programme of activity as part of this year's Stage And Screen Festival. It was great to see people back 'on the green' enjoying the open air cinema and the theatre performances were amazing with the stunning backdrop of Thetford Priory".

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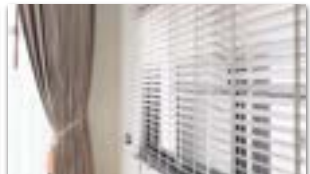
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Spotlight On...

Cosy Home Furnishings

Cosy Home Furnishings aka Cosy Carpets has been based in Thetford for thirty years and is one of the town's most loved independent businesses. Originally established by brothers Paul and Ricky Baker in Minstergate, the building there is still known as Cosy Carpets. The business moved to its current Mundford Road site in 2003 and was purchased by Norfolk based businessman Andrew Kerry in 2017. Although the business now covers Norfolk and Suffolk, it still retains its roots within the local community, serving generations of Thetford families and supporting local organisations.

"We are that local shop," explained manager Colin Peat. "We offer an old school style personal service. Many of our customers have been with us for decades and are now bringing their children in to furnish their homes. We've developed relationships with our customers that remain central to all that we do. Each customer is vital to us, unlike the bigger chains where you just become an order number."

Cosy Home Furnishings covers all your carpet and flooring needs from landlord to the proud houseowner, and all budgets. You'll find a wide range of domestic carpets in a range of quality, textures and colour including British wool carpets, alongside vinyl flooring from major brands such as Rhinofloor, Tarkett, Nairn, Distinctive and Karndean. And if you're in a hurry there's even a



range of takeaway carpets in stock. Alternatively opt for the free full measuring and sample service, where you can choose your floor covering from the comfort of your own home and benefit from Cosy's highly skilled

long standing fitting team.

But it's not just flooring at Cosy Home Furnishings, they cater for all your furnishing needs too. With a huge range of beds including stock to take away. Test beds from well-known brands such as Bouyant, Furnico and Sweet Dreams. Cosy's knowledgeable friendly team are on hand to help you choose the perfect bed or mattress for your home, whether it's a traditional mattress or a modern roll up mat, which are ready for you to takeaway and sleep on that night! The store also has a wide range of sofas, armchairs and furniture to suit every budget. Discover bedroom furniture by Raunch and Welcome along with exclusive dining furniture ranges and the most comfortable sofas, available as full sets or individual pieces.

This September the store is being remerchandised for the autumn season with a new extended made to measure curtain and blinds range and the launch of a picture gallery, all keenly priced to add that finishing touch to your room.



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heritage open days



Creativity Unwrapped

We have so much going on, we can barely squeeze it all in this month! Coin striking by our resident medieval moneyer on **Sat 9 Sept** and one of the 'crazy ladies' that took a community garden representing Thetford to Hampton Court Flower Show will be with us on **Sat 16 Sept**. Plus we have local maker Caroline King with us with our garden themed makes.

For the first time for a long time Thetford will be on the map for Norfolk Open Studios. Airbnb Maker's Cottage in Magdalen Street will become a pop up studio **Sat 30 Sept - Sun 8 Oct**. There will be six makers on show, some demonstrating, including screen printing. We're really excited to bring Thetford this, so do come along - as with HODs, access is completely FREE. There will be lots of gorgeous goodies for sale too. FREE brochures available at our shop.

Events

Euston Hall opens from **Sat 26 Aug - Fri 1 Sept**. **Ghost Walks** return from **Tues 24 Oct** and our new season of workshops continue. The QR code below takes you to our events page or call in the shop for your tickets.

Meet artists | Experience creativity | Buy art

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Teenagers Forge Cultural Links

In August 2023 Thetford hosted a visit by a delegation of councillors, curators and young people from Nagawa, Japan. This is part of a long running friendship between the towns of Thetford and Nagawa and a partnership between Ancient House's Teenage History Club and the Obsidian Museum's Young Obsidian Ambassadors young people's programme.

The friendship is based on the similarities between the mining of flint by Neolithic people at Grimes Graves and the mining of obsidian by Jomon people at the Hoshikuso Obsidian Mines near Nagawa. The cultural exchange between the young people is at the heart of the project aiming to promote international understanding and friendship between the two continents while also inspiring and raising young people's aspirations.



Members of Teenage History Club with Young Obsidian Ambassadors
Image: ©NMS



We packed as much flint history and English culture into three days as we could. Starting at Grimes Graves. English Heritage kindly allowed us to explore the site, which is

currently closed to the public, and get a first look at the new visitor's centre. On the second day we covered gun flints, flint buildings, and created a flint and obsidian zine at Thetford Library. We were delighted that Cllr John Ward and Cllr Robert Kybird were able to join us. The final day included an Obsidian Knapping Workshop, a visit to Cllr Stuart Wright, Mayor of Thetford, fish and chips and games at Castle Park.

We hope to be able to take a group of Thetford teenagers to visit Japan in the future but for now we are exploring other digital methods. Our friendship is founded on flint and obsidian so should be solid as a rock!

Melissa Hawker

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Bus Service Improvement Plan Brings Cheaper Bus Fares

Regular bus users and people travelling in groups are set to benefit from cheaper bus fares from next month thanks to money that Norfolk County Council secured from the Department for Transport (DfT) to improve bus services across the County. The new fares discount, which will start on 3rd September will mean that group day tickets for up to five people, weekly tickets and monthly tickets on all services across Norfolk will be discounted by 25%.

Cllr Graham Plant, cabinet member for highways, infrastructure and transport, said: "This is a huge saving for people and comes at a time when we are all trying to make our money stretch further. Depending on the operator this saving could be around £25-£30 on a monthly ticket. Offering the discount on group tickets also makes the bus more affordable to families and groups of friends looking for a greener way to travel on a day out across the county." This is the third in a series of fares discounts recently announced, with cheaper tickets on all Norwich park & ride services from September and the King's Lynn Town Zone flat fare of £1.50".

Approximately £5.3million of the funding received from the DfT has been allocated to fares promotions to make bus travel more affordable



in Norfolk over the next three years. Richard Holden, roads minister said: "People up and down the country deserve a modern, reliable, and affordable public transport system. That is why we have provided Norfolk County Council with over £49 million to boost its bus services. Supporting the Council with lowering fares for group tickets is fantastic for local residents, who will now be able to get to work, attend medical appointments and visit loved ones for less and more easily."

Coach Services Bus Changes

8pm, Fri 1st - 6am, Mon 4th September

8pm, Fri 8th - 6am, Mon 11th September

8pm, Fri 15th - 6am, Mon 18th September

Due to a road closure on the A134 Thetford to Bury Road (near Bracken Road) to Barnham Camp, the 84/86 will be unable to serve any stops on Bury Road/Queensway and will divert through Elveden. Passengers will need to board/alight at Thetford Bus Station during these times.



The Fair is coming to Thetford...

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Saturday 2 - 10pm & Sunday 2 - 7pm

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NOTHING ON TV AGAIN?

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SHORT MAT BOWLS? FREE INFORMAL SESSIONS

These 2 hour sessions will begin on
Friday 8th September at 2 pm and/or
Wednesday 13th September at 7 pm

Bowls will be provided, but please wear soft, flat
soled shoes (or just socks)

Please call Pauline on
07787 875957 to
reserve your place or
just turn up at the
**Charles Burrell Centre,
Staniforth Road,
Thetford IP24 3LH**



Thetford Short Mat Bowls Club

Short Mat Bowls is for everyone. It is easy to learn, and is friendly and sociable. The Thetford Short Mat Bowls Club was launched in January 2017, bringing Thetford into the family of short mat clubs in Norfolk. No previous experience is required and you can be sure of a warm welcome.

Thetford Short Mat Bowls Club are a friendly and welcoming club based at the Charles Burrell Centre, offering people of all ages and genders a relaxed and sociable atmosphere in which to play bowls. They meet on Wednesday evenings from 7.30pm and Friday afternoon from 2pm for a sociable roll up. Members are of all abilities and range in age from ten to ninety years. Why not give it a try? You don't need any specialist equipment, just wear loose comfortable clothes and a pair of socks, or soft shoes. Help is on hand to introduce you to this easily accessible sport that's suitable for all abilities.

The club also takes part in internal and external competitions including the Norfolk Afternoon League.

For more information please call Pauline on 07787 875957.

Enjoy A Fresh Take On Dickens

Join magic Floor Productions for this reimagined take on the classic Dickens' Oliver Twist. David Lewington's modern songs give this story a fresh take. The story is set in Victorian England with a slight 'Steampunk vibe', giving the tale a unique feel. Meet Fagin and his gang as they take a feisty Oliver and attempt to seduce him into their underground gang. Will he become the newest member, or will he see the light?

Magic Floor Productions have been overwhelmed with the support they have had from the people of Thetford and beyond. "We have grown so much as a company and hope that you have benefitted from some fun theatre over the last few years, from Alice in Wonderland to A Christmas Carol. We hope you will join us on the journey into another of Dickens' world." With a cast of thirty including an exceptional cast of fourteen young people, Magic Floor Productions hope you will come and support local theatre. They are having a blast rehearsing and look forward to opening the doors to you on the 29th and 30th October.

To book with 10% discount please quote
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FRIDAY 29th 7.30PM

SATURDAY 30th 2.30PM & 7.30PM

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Litter Groups Looking for Support

A Community Litter Picking group is looking forward to getting back to work after taking a break for the summer months.

The Burrell Ward Litter picking group meets on the second Saturday of the month from 10am. They alternate their start location with the group meeting on Saturday 9th September at the Charles Burrell Centre. The following month, on 14th October, they will gather at the Meet Up Cafe before returning back to Charles Burrell Centre on 11th November. The activity is open to all with equipment provided. Following the session, refreshments are available in the Engine Room Cafe or Meet Up Cafe. For more information, contact Councillor Chris Harvey on 07879 697398.

NEW for September there will now also be a litter pick covering Priory Ward. This group meets on the second Sunday of the month, beginning on Sunday 10th September, meeting at 10am at the Abbey Neighbourhood Centre. The group will largely focus on the Abbey Estate. Future dates include Sunday 15th October, 12th November (at a later start time of 2pm), and 9th December. For more information, contact Councillor Terry Land on 07734 769183.



Other regular litter picking groups will be continuing this autumn including the monthly activity organised by Norwich Road Estate Residents Association. This group meets on the first Saturday of each month, gathering at Admirals Way shops from 10am. Forthcoming dates include 2nd September, 7th October, 4th November and 2nd December.

There are also two monthly litter picking sessions organised by Cloverfield And The Willows residents association (CAWRA). These are on Fridays and Saturdays, normally around the third weekend. To check forthcoming dates, please visit the website: www.cawrathetford.org



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Tales From The Riverbank Exhibition Returns To Thetford

This fascinating exhibition is returning from touring the Brecks to Ancient House Museum from 1st September until their open day on 9th September. It will stand alongside the *Made By The River* exhibition that shows the incredible variety of trades in Thetford, and the importance of the rivers to the town.

The *Tales from the Riverbank* exhibition was curated by the museum's young historians, and tells the story of how people had fun in, on or by the rivers over the last 130 years. There are stories of swimming, boating, fishing, and festivals. Riverside festivals in the 1930s included pillow fights on a pole and duck hunts, and when most people in Thetford did not have electricity it was reported that the procession of illuminated boats was "an exceedingly pretty spectacle".

Local people invited to share memories (of river swimming in the 1970s and 80s) said that they spent all their summers down there "at the steps", their mothers sending them out with a pack up to spend most of the six week holidays playing in the river, having a lot of fun and getting suntans. Imogen Radford, project lead for Tales from the



River project said, "The display has been warmly received in several Brecks libraries and museums so far, sparking many memories at coffee mornings, drop-in events and when people pop in to have a look. After a successful visit to Thetford Library earlier in the year, I'm delighted that it is coming back to the museum where it was created, and in the company of the excellent *Made by the River* exhibition."

The exhibition complements the film also made by the young historians which can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/RV3NDh5KQKs>, and it can be seen online: <https://tinyurl.com/TRiverExhib>

The project is part of The Brecks Fen Edge and Rivers Landscape Partnership Scheme, supported by National Lottery Heritage Fund.

You're Invited!

Come along to our Open Evening

Thursday 5th October – 4pm - 6pm

Proud to provide an inspiring school and nursery that nurtures children to achieve their full potential. Creating curious, independent learners who are fully prepared to take on the next step of their education.

As part of the Inspiration Trust we are proud to be able to play a part in offering the children of Thetford an excellent curriculum that starts from 3 years old, right up to the age of 19.



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September At Ancient House

Ancient House is delighted to be part of this year's Heritage Open Day celebrations. The museum will be open for free on Saturday 9th and Saturday 16th September. On Saturday 9th September the house will be alive with costumed characters who all work at Thetford industries along the river – learn about canning, pulp, steam, brewing and more. Then on 16th September you can explore the links between the Duleep Singh family and Thetford. Visitors can also enjoy the Ancient House Art Family Trail and craft tables.

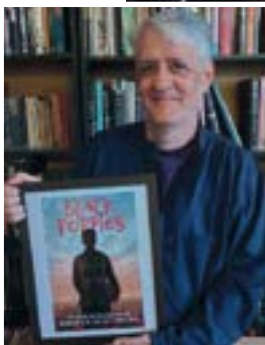
Ancient House Autumn Digital Talks programme kicks off on Thursday 28th September when Stephen Bourne presents an informative and accessible overview of his work as a historian of Black Britain via Zoom. Starting in 1991 with his first book, *Aunt Esther's Story*, Stephen has managed, against the odds, to publish many books about the Black British experience. These include *Black Poppies*, his acclaimed study of Black servicemen in the First World War. His latest book is *Deep Are the Roots*, which celebrates the pioneers of Black British theatre, beginning in 1825 when Ira Aldridge made history as the first Black actor to play Othello in the United Kingdom. Other talks in the programme include an exploration of malt houses, the history of coffee, and historian Dr Fern Riddell telling the story of radical suffragette Kitty Marion. All the talks are £2 or free for Norfolk Museums Service Passholders and Ancient House Friends.

Are your children interested in History? Then why not join one of our free History Clubs. On Wednesdays children aged between six and eleven years can explore local history and go behind the scenes at the museum.



Meet costumed characters or enjoy a series of digital talks this autumn at Ancient House

On Fridays young people aged eleven to twenty five years can join our Teenage History Club to undertake historical projects, the first one will include learning about Victorian ghost photography!



For more information contact:

ancienthouse@norfolk.gov.uk

All events can be booked here:

<https://norfolk-museums.arttickets.org.uk/ancient-house>



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* Multiply is open to anyone in Norfolk aged 19 and over who does not already have a GCSE at grade C or equivalent in maths.

 Norfolk County Council

Improve Your Maths Skills With Multiply

Multiply is a government programme to help adults improve their maths skills. It's open to anyone over the age of 19 who doesn't have maths GCSE at grade C or equivalent. Multiply participant, Lily, dreamed of going to university but unexpected health issues meant she was out of education for two years. "I first met the Multiply team at an event for people who might be feeling isolated. They talked to me about the routes I could take to improve my maths skills and soon after the Adult Learning Team contacted me about joining the Multiply project."



Through Multiply, Lily has had one to one and online tuition with a supportive tutor who gave her lots of encouragement. "My tutor has really listened to me and supported me in my aims in maths education. I've struggled with words and numbers moving about on the page, also with reading." Lily was also supported by a SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator). "The SENCo showed me how to use text to speech technology and this has had an impact not only on my studies but also my day-to-day life. A reader has also been arranged for my exams and that has really helped me process the questions and information."

Lily has found it very easy to communicate with her tutor and the SENCo. "I know that if anything goes wrong or I have any problems, there is someone safe to talk to. The experience is also helping me mentally – I'm feeling more positive and improving my communication skills. Lily also has less anxiety around maths and recently passed her Entry Level exam with 94%. "I'm a lot more confident about going into Level 1 now and can't wait to have further success in maths."

"I'm hoping to get my Level 2 eventually which will support my ambition of going to university when my health allows me to. It's good to know there is support from the Multiply project to help me achieve my dreams." If you think Multiply could help you improve your maths skills visit:

www.norfolk.gov.uk/Multiply or email multiply@norfolk.gov.uk

RAF Honington Flying Activity

The RAF Honington Airfield will be supporting a major exercise between 26th August and 15th September including Air Transport Aircraft and Support Helicopters.



Flying activity will take place from 4pm until 2am, but not all of the dates will see flying activities. Aircraft types expected will be A400M Atlas tactical transport aircraft, and potentially C-17 Globemaster strategic air transport aircraft. Rotary assets will be the CH-47 Chinook helicopter with these also refuelling on the ground at RAF Honington. The use of RAF Honington reflects the significance of the airfield in delivering high value training to both aircrew and groundcrew for operations across the globe as seen lately when the UK responded to the need to evacuate personnel from Sudan.

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Thetford Library News

As the summer draws to a close, so does the annual Summer Reading Challenge at the library. Children and young people in our town have done themselves proud and more children have already completed the challenge this year compared to the previous four years! If you have read your six books but haven't yet collected your medal and certificate – there's still time, just pop into any Norfolk Library before the 16th September.

The Summer Reading Challenge at Thetford Library is more than just a summer activity; it is a gateway to adventure, knowledge and lifelong learning. Our hope is to ignite the joy of reading and learning in children, setting them on a path to discover the wonders of literature throughout their lives. The local library offers activities all year round for both children and adults, including: Bounce and Rhyme & Stay and Play, Creative Workshops, Code Club, Migrant Community Support, Lego Club, Mini Movers, Board Games, Just a Cuppa, Meet-up for Autistic Adults, Computer and Digital Support, Book Groups and Storytelling Sessions which bring the magic of books to life.

To keep up-to-date please visit the website:
www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraryonline



Polina, Maja and Szymon with their Summer Reading Challenge certificates and medals
Image: ©Norfolk Library service



Sandcastles Nursery

We are proud to introduce our newly renovated Nursery at Redcastle Family School. We offer 30 hour full time and 15 hour part time places.



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Singing Workshop Success

Over thirty young people aged from six to sixteen years old have enjoyed the annual Thetford Voices summer singing workshop at Thetford Grammar School. Thetford Voices was founded in 2007 by former Thetford Headteacher John Weeks, to provide musical opportunities for children in and around Thetford. John handed over the reins to Polina Sosnina in 2022.

Former TGS pupil Polina has been involved in Thetford Voices since 2011 and is now the Organist for St Martins In The Fields in London. Her team this year included George Cook, Sarah Skinner and Charles Andrews. Thetford Voices is a partner charity of Thetford Singers, who also supported the workshop by providing additional chaperone support and encouragement.

The two day workshop culminated with a performance for family, friends and invited guests including the Mayor of Thetford, Cllr Stuart Wright. Introducing the young people to the audience at their performance Polina said, "They learnt so much so quickly, I hope you appreciate all the hard work they've put in over the past two days."



**Above: This year's cohort for Thetford Voices Summer Workshop
Left: Polina in action
All images ©Thetford Voices**



And it was clear from the strong start that this year's participants had worked their socks off!

A great selection of upbeat, joyous songs about animals were enthusiastically learnt with support from the fantastic team, who really engaged with their groups. The younger group definitely won the cutest performance award with their fabulous actions during their performance of Pigs could fly and Crocodile. The performance finished with a rousing interpretation of Calico Cats, rewarded with a huge round of well-deserved applause.

Thetford Voices aims to keep their workshops as accessible as possible through sponsorship and donations. If you would like to contribute to their running costs please scan the QR code or visit:



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<https://tinyurl.com/fundthetfordvoices>

All contributions go towards their running costs. For information about the Christmas workshop please email: thetfordvoices@gmail.com



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You're invited!

Thursday 28th September · 6–8pm
Thetford Academy Open Evening

Thetford Academy is a school at the academic and cultural heart of the community.

Rapidly expanding, this is an exciting time to join, having recently received its best ever GCSE results with a record number of pupils achieving Grade 9s.



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Trust Recognised As Centre Of Excellence for Teacher Training

Inspiration Trust is a multi-academy trust supporting a family of 17 schools across Norfolk and north Suffolk. Since 2017, Inspiration Trust has been training primary and secondary teachers to work in the region and beyond, many of whom have taken up posts in the Trust's schools. In Thetford, the Trust have the following schools: Thetford Academy, Diamond Academy and Queensway Infant Academy.

In 2021, the Trust was designated Teaching School Hub status - just one of two awarded the prestigious status in Norfolk. Inspiration Trust is recognised as a 'centre of excellence' for teacher and leadership training and development and as a result is able to work with Department for Education (DfE) approved lead providers to deliver Golden Thread programmes.

From September 2023 Inspiration Trust is delighted to offer Initial Teacher Training with the National Institute of Teaching (NlOT). As a successful group of schools, NlOT selected Inspiration Trust to be one of its key strategic partners in the East of England and were named one its the first 'Associate Colleges' in 2022. Chris Moon, Inspiration Teaching School Hub's Geography Subject Tutor, is based at Thetford Academy and says this about the NlOT programme, "The NlOT has developed a rigorous and exciting ITT programme with real attention to detail in terms of the latest educational research and subject specialisms. The course explores the intricacies of the subject, as well as equipping trainees with the principles behind excellent subject teaching and deep subject knowledge. Teacher training is a hugely important endeavour, perhaps now more than ever, and I am excited to play a part in this as a subject tutor."

Facilitators are rooted in schools and know the day-to-day challenges that teachers face. The course covers the fundamentals of subject and curriculum knowledge, delivered by experts in their fields. Cecily White (pictured) is a trainee English teacher on our 2023/4 programme and will be placed at Thetford Academy. Reflecting on her experience with NlOT@InspirationTrust so far, she had this to say, "NlOT@InspirationTrust has been incredible in supporting me with accomplishing my goals of becoming a teacher from the moment I sent in my original application.



Above: Participants for the 2023 NlOT Inspiration Trust programme



I am particularly excited to get started and give something back to the community and town I have grown up in. Even though I have only completed the first week of preparatory training, I feel more confident in taking this next step and feel reassured that I will be learning from a very experienced team who will support me in developing into an excellent teacher."

Inspiration Trust teacher training courses are a year long, but can be completed part time. They are suitable for graduates and career changers alike. All trainees benefit from a strong support network and an exciting environment in which to train. All of our courses lead to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and 60 Master's Level credits.

From October 2024, Inspiration Trust will be recruiting for its 2024/5 cohort and will be on the lookout for exceptional individuals that want to become outstanding teachers; people who genuinely enjoy working with children and young people and who are passionate about education and the role that this plays in improving outcomes for children. For more information about the NlOT programme please visit:

www.inspirationteachingschoolhub.org/516/teacher-training



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Thetford Academy Celebrates Another Year of Excellent Results

Staff and students at Thetford Academy are delighted after another great set of exam results in both A Level and GCSEs.

70% of students at Thomas Paine Sixth Form gained grades A* - C, with particularly strong results in Computer Science, Music and Sports Science. All students undertaking an EPQ (an independent research project) achieved a grade C or above. With her A*, A and B Cathy Blakey-Stoppard is heading off to the University of Surrey to study Veterinary Medicine. Speaking about her grades she said, "I'm so excited to continue my studies at my first choice, Surrey University. Support has been amazing from staff and teachers when I was going through a tough time earlier in the year just before my exams."

Thomas Paine Sixth Form students will now head to universities across the country including Southampton, Loughborough, Brunel and Lincoln. Thomas Paine Sixth Form students have also had successes in gaining places on competitive degree apprenticeships. Liam Geraghty will be training as a chartered surveyor with ST1 Group, while Ruben King will be completing an apprenticeship in industrial automation and theatre control systems with K-AACtech. The diverse career path being followed by the students also includes a tattoo apprenticeship, paediatric nursing, sports psychology, paramedic science, music, fine art, fashion marketing, ecology and conservation, computer science and hospitality.

Nuna, (pictured) who will be attending the University of Brunel in London to study Law said, "My teachers have been really supportive throughout my time here, they always pushed me to do better and I wouldn't have been able to do it without them. I couldn't have asked for better mentors."

"It's been a delight to see students coming in to get their results after seven years of hard work. Despite the challenges of school during the pandemic, they've worked hard and



Cathy Blakey-Stoppard celebrates her A Level grades, she will now study to become a vet

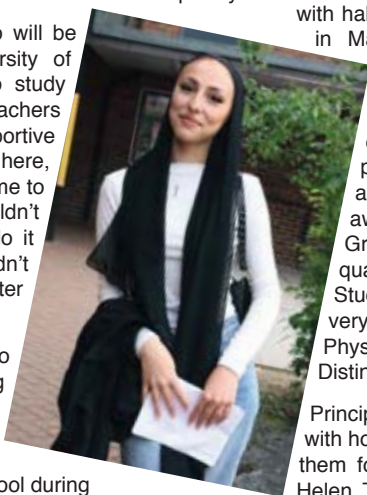
achieved. It's good to see that we've got students not only going to university but also degree apprenticeships. I would like to wish them every success as they move on to the next steps in their academic careers." said Thetford Academy Principal Michael Fordham.

Head of Sixth Form, Helen Thomas-Jones said, "Congratulations Year 13! The results today are testament to the students' hard work and it has been a delight to work with them to help achieve their goals. We wish them all the very best for their bright futures ahead!"

This year's GCSE results were also very good, with an increase from the last comparable exams in 2019 of 51% to 60% of students gaining a grade 4 – 9 (C-A*+ in old grades). Since it opened in 2010, results at Thetford Academy have steadily improved, and in recent years the school has had particular strengths in maths and sciences, with half of students gaining a Grade 5 or above in Maths, while in Biology, Chemistry and

Physics half of students gained a grade 7 or above. Twenty five students sat the additional Further Maths GCSE, and half of them achieved a Grade 9, the highest possible grade. Of all the qualifications achieved by students in 2023, 9% were awarded the highest possible grades of Grade 9 (4%) or Grade 8 (5%), with 17% of qualifications awarded a Grade 7 or above. Students taking BTEC qualifications also did very well, with a fifth of students taking the Physical Education course achieving a Starred Distinction, the highest possible grade.

Principal Michael Fordham said he was thrilled with how well the students had done and praised them for their hard work. Head of Sixth Form, Helen Thomas-Jones said it was a privilege to see the students develop from entering at year



7, and then to see many of them enter the Sixth Form before going out into the world and their next steps. There were some stand-out performances from individual students. Twin brothers Taylor and Tyler achieved between them twelve Grade 9s, six Grade 8s, one Grade 7 and a Starred Distinction. Both Taylor and Tyler will be continuing their education at Thomas Paine Sixth Form.

Sarah Blakey-Stoppard achieved six Grade 9s and a Starred Distinction. Ben Buckley who achieved three Grade 9s, three Grade 8s, one Grade 7 and a Starred Distinction was also Sports Personality of the Year, whilst Head Student Lexie Devlin



(pictured above) achieved five Grade 9s, one Grade 8, two Grade 7s and a Starred Distinction. Speaking about her fellow Year 11 students she said, "I am so very proud of this year group. After a quite disrupted and difficult five years at secondary school, everyone has pulled through and worked to their highest potential. I saw everyone crack on this year and try their hardest, and I could never be more proud."

Thetford Academy will be hosting their annual Open Evening on Thursday 28th September from 6pm to 8pm, and Thomas Paine Sixth Form will be hosting their Open Evening on Thursday 12th October from 6pm to 8pm.



Ben Buckley (2nd right) discovers his GCSE grades along with some friends

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Come along to our Open Mornings

- 26th and 28th Sept – 9am – 10:30am
- 10th and 12th Oct – 9am – 10:30am

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We're proud to be an Inspiration Trust school, working in partnership with our sister schools, Queensway Infant Academy and Nursery, Thetford Academy and Thomas Paine Sixth Form to offer the children of Thetford an excellent education from 3 years old right up until they are 19!



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Norfolk Community Law Service

In partnership with Norfolk Community Law Service (NCLS), Thetford Library and Thetford Citizens Advice will be facilitating free specialist legal triage advice sessions. These sessions are completely confidential, and this service aims to support you throughout every step of your legal matter, either at the appointment or working with you afterwards.



Sessions will be held on the 1st Monday of each month from 10am – 12 noon, at Thetford Citizens Advice, Abbey Neighbourhood Centre, Exeter Way, Thetford, IP24 1EE. Or the 3rd Friday of each month from 10am – 12 noon at Thetford Library, Raymond Street, Thetford, IP24 2EA. Norfolk Community Law Service is a registered charity providing a range of free, independent, confidential legal services including:



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Thomas Paine Pilgrimage For Ladies

A trio of Palestinian ladies made a whistle stop tour of Thetford during their visit to the region after hearing about Thetford's most famous son, Thomas Paine. Hosted by CADFA (Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association), the women stopped on route to Peterborough where they were continuing their talk programme.

Just days earlier they spoke of the brutality they have faced in their homeland as part of the Material Power exhibition at Kettles Yard, Cambridge before moving onto Diss. It was at Diss that they were told about Thomas Paine and his campaigns in the eighteenth century. The women asked if they could visit his birthplace, saying that they were keen to visit as Paine was against oppression as they are.

Theresa Mason and Glen Williams who both live in the town and are part of the Norwich Palestinian Solidarity Campaign jumped at the opportunity to host the ladies. They organised a welcoming party including the Mayor of Thetford Cllr Stuart Wright, a keen admirer of Thomas Paine's work himself. With the aid of an interpreter the Mayor welcomed the group and delivered a potted history of Paine's life before presenting them with copies



of two of Paine's most important works, *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man* in front of the town's internationally famous statue.

Theresa said she was thrilled to see how many people turned up to welcome the ladies. Glen said that he didn't realise that Thomas Paine was born here until I moved here, "I don't think we shout about him enough."

After admiring Paine's statue and the obligatory photos, the group took a short walk in Paine's footsteps down to the Thetford Grammar School. They then headed to Button Island to admire the Duleep Singh statue before enjoying an early supper of fish and chips!



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Thetford Garden And Allotment Club Notes For September

1st September sees the start of meteorological autumn and is also the Feast Day of St Fiacre, the Patron saint of gardeners!

At the end of the month you can start to plant spring daffodils and narcissi, in the ground or pots, they can get away to a good start in readiness for a spectacular spring display.



Get spring bulbs ready for planting this autumn

Many crops are still producing in the garden or plot. Winter lettuce and spinach can be directly sown now for enjoying later in the year. Spring cabbage can be planted in their final growing position as soon as they have five or six leaves. If you still have many unripe tomatoes towards the end of the month you might consider making green tomato chutney, delicious with cheese. Alternatively the unripe fruit can be stored in a drawer or shoebox with a banana to help them ripen, they can then be used in the usual way. If you wish to enjoy your potatoes before the slugs do, then lift them before the end of the month! Ideally, lift the tubers on a dry day and leave them on the surface to dry off in the air. Store them in hessian or paper sacks. If you've grown First or Second Earlies, they do not store so well so use them up. Main crop varieties should be stored in a cold, frost free place and can then be used up until Christmas and sometimes beyond. Check the bags regularly to make sure there are no rotten ones which will contaminate the remainder. Grass will still be growing and require cutting whilst the weather stays mild. Any bare patches can be seeded over while the soil is still warm and damp. Cover with netting to prevent the birds feasting on the seed and it should germinate fairly speedily. Bring any house plants that have been outside indoors before temperatures start to drop.

Our Club AGM followed by our Harvest Supper takes place on 28th September commencing at 6.30pm at the United Reformed Church in Earls Street. We urgently require new members so do come along as we review the past year and plan for the future.

Happy Gardening! Maggie Baldwin



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Breckland Cats Protection

As the weather warms up, fleas can be found in abundance on wild and domesticated animals, jumping effortlessly onto your cat. Affected cats will often groom excessively making fleas paradoxically hard to find! A tell-tale sign is often evidence of small black granules of flea faeces – often called flea 'dirt'.

Many cats aren't particularly sensitive to flea bites, so just because they aren't showing any signs of a problem, it does not mean your cats aren't infected. At this time of year without protection it is reasonable to assume that most cats will be carrying a few fleas! Harvest mites are another seasonal concern. They are most active between July and November and are found in woodland and grassy areas where they swarm onto passing cats. Some animals are particularly sensitive to the mite saliva and can be very itchy. These tiny mites are bright orange in colour and are often found on the feet, legs, armpits, genitals, tummy and occasionally the ears.

The important differential to parasitic itches (which are very common) is an allergic itch.



Skin allergies are reasonably common especially at this time of year. Pollens from plants, grasses and trees irritate the skin. The most common places for sore spots to develop are typically the feet, stomach armpits, groin and ears. Underlying skin allergies are also a very common cause of ear disease. The skin in affected areas will become pink and the pet will start to excessively lick, scratch or chew at them, causing more damage which often triggers bacterial infections, making the problem even worse. So if your cat is showing signs of skin problems, take him to your vet for a check-up. They can check for fleas and advise you on the best preventative products. Diagnosis of allergies is more tricky, but blood tests and skin testing can help us identify the cause. It is usually difficult to cure allergies, but modern treatments can be very effective in making cats less itchy.

For help or advice, or if you need assistance with the cost of neutering, please call us on 01842 810018

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Happy House-proud Warblers?

Chiffchaffs are quite small, plain-looking members of the warbler family. Whilst they can now be found in Thetford in every month of the year, their diminutive size and olive-green plumage can make Chiffchaffs hard to spot. Late March to May is when you're most likely to notice them, as territorial males announce their presence and compete for mates by singing their simple, cheery 'chiff-chaff' song. However, Chiffchaffs are actually at their most numerous here in August, as local breeding birds are joined by others moving south, with the numbers further inflated by juveniles that hatched earlier in the summer.



Weekly peak Chiffchaff counts at BTO Nunnery Lakes, (2009 – 23)

At this time of year, the rather flat-toned 'sweep' call, often given insistently for minutes at a time, is the best clue to the presence of a Chiffchaff. Once you get your ear in, it is a very common sound in August and September. On one walk round BTO's Nunnery Lakes reserve last August I counted 78 Chiffchaffs, most of which were heard but not seen. If you recognise the sound, you might even hear one in your garden or the local park during the next few weeks. The xeno-canto website is a great place to learn bird sounds, and you can listen to a typical Chiffchaff 'sweep' call here:

<https://xeno-canto.org/712747>

Warmer winters are benefitting Chiffchaffs. The number spending the winter in the UK is on the up, and overwinter survival is increasing. Although most Chiffchaffs still head further south into southern Europe and north Africa, data from BTO's BirdTrack scheme reveal that they are returning two weeks earlier than they did in the 1960s. This means that they can get down to the business of nesting earlier, allowing them more time to raise multiple broods. For more fascinating facts and figures about Chiffchaffs – and any other British bird – check out BTO's all-new BirdFacts pages: www.bto.org/birdfacts

Nick Moran, BTO

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Thetford Society

Graham Higgins entertained a good number of members at the August meeting with his historical panorama from Boudica's uprising against the Romans to the agricultural marvel of the Turnip.



Boudica Image: © Norfolk Museums Service

He recounted Boudica's gathering with Brits from Essex and Kent on neutral territory at Denham in Suffolk. From there they marched on Colchester and then London destroying all before them before being defeated at St Albans by a smaller but better organised Roman force. In later times the castle at Denham was rebuilt and played a leading part in the dispute between Stephen and Queen Matilda that led to the subsequent reign of Henry 2nd. Members were walked through the following centuries and heard how Gazeley and Cavenham played important roles in the history of East Anglia. And from this area Charles (Turnip) Townshend pioneered the four-crop rotation in about 1700. The cultivation of the Turnip enabled farm stock to be fed through the winter months and ultimately led to a population explosion. Graham concluded his talk about more recent times when the great estates were broken up and sold. Graham was warmly thanked for his very interesting presentation.

The next meeting will be the AGM and will take place on Tuesday 5th September at 7.30pm in the United Reformed Church, Earls Street. New and old members will be welcome as always.

Peter Thomson

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Support Group Seeks New Members

Having a group where you can seek support and be yourself is important for all of us, but for someone neurodiverse it can also be a lifeline. Hearing one such group was at risk of closing, prompted Thetford woman Kiah Waite to step forward to help provide this vital service. Thetford Library has been hosting two groups, one on a Monday evening at 5.30pm every two weeks, and the other on Wednesday morning at 11am, every month. "I only found out about the group recently, because numbers were quite small it was decided that only one group would remain. So, I volunteered to help and keep the Wednesday group going." Kiah is hoping a few more people will join and is encouraging anyone who feels they might benefit from the group to come along. Not only is it an opportunity to socialise in a quiet, safe environment, but Kiah is also hoping to have some speakers and support sessions. She's also ensuring that the light refreshments available include Free From, "I know what it's like to have treats you can't eat," she explained "so I'm making sure even that element is inclusive."

The group offers games, chats and support. Kiah continued, "If you are newly diagnosed, it helps to understand how you can feel. There's lots of groups for children but not so many for adults or adults with autistic or neurodiverse children. I'm keen to help people get the information they need. The world can be such a confusing place and to meet others who feel the same way can be nice. It also means you don't need to mask." The current members have ideas of how they'd like to shape the group, and Kiah is working with them to achieve this. The space upstairs in the library is bright but quiet and comfortable. For Kiah it's been useful to find people who you can relate to. "We also have people come in from the group Helping Hands". Kiah is about to undertake a Sensory Integration course which she hopes to



Henry and Kiah are looking forward to supporting adults living with autism or neurodiverse children

use to help others in the group. Kiah is hopeful to be able to offer a similar workshop in other places, and would love to do one at the Mind coffee shop should that ever become a possibility, saying that it's always good to have a choice of days or evenings. "A group like this can help someone get out of the house and see people."

The next meeting will be on Monday 11th and Wednesday 20th September. For more information about the group please ask at Thetford Library or contact: thetford.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk



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Advice On Buying A Car

For many people, buying a car is a major purchase and whether it's new or second-hand, the process can seem daunting and complicated. But don't worry, there's lots of information on the steps to take when buying a car and what you can do afterwards if something goes wrong on the Citizens Advice website.

Firstly, where are you going to buy the car? If you're buying from a trader, choose a trustworthy one with an established name with a good reputation. Ideally, they will be part of a trade association or follow the industry's code of practice. Buying via an auction, this is much riskier as you'll have fewer legal protections like the right to returns or refunds so carefully read the terms and conditions before you bid. If you buy from a private seller, there's a few extra steps to take. For instance, try to inspect the car at their home address so if something goes wrong later, you have a record of that.

Make sure the car's details are correct by using the DVLA's free online vehicle information checker. You'll need the registration number, MOT test number, mileage and make/model of the car to do this check. Also, check the car's MOT history for free on gov.uk Keep a copy of both these results (take a screenshot or download the information) as well as the original advert or description of the car. You might also consider getting a private history check to see if the car's been reported stolen, still has money owing on it, or has been in a serious crash. This will cost about £20. Before buying a car, it's good to check if it meets emissions standards as it could mean paying extra charges when driving through London's ULEZ or clean air zones across the UK.

Inspecting the car is crucial before buying. Ideally, do this during the day when it's not raining (scratches are harder to see on a wet car) and



take it for a test drive for at least 15 minutes and on different types of road, if possible. Check you have the appropriate insurance for a test drive (either your own or the seller's policy might cover you). Once you've decided on a car, don't be afraid to negotiate on the price. If you take out a loan or finance to buy it, make sure you can afford the repayments over the lifetime of the contract. If you pay with cash, you will have fewer protections than other options like debit. Often, despite doing all these checks, you might find something wrong with the car after you've bought it. You may have a legal right to a repair, the cost of a repair or some money back but it's on a case-by-case basis and some examples might be the car's mileage is wrong or the car keeps breaking down.

For more information, check out the Citizens Advice website or call its consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133.

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Volunteer With EACH

Bookworms have the chance to combine their love of literature with helping a leading children's charity. East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH) is on the lookout for volunteers to help support its fast-growing online Book Shop. The busy store has become a vital income stream and helps the charity continue its work supporting families and caring for children and young people with life threatening conditions. EACH Book Shop Deputy Manager Sue Nettleingham said: "This is a role anyone who loves reading will thoroughly enjoy. We sell all genres, both fiction and non-fiction, and it's fascinating what gets donated. They range from classics and children's favourites to others that are rare and niche. There's so much variety and, alongside the books, we're now introducing mixed media in the form of CDs, DVDs and Console games. It's great fun and we'd love to hear from anyone willing to get involved, even just for a morning or afternoon a week."

As well as being fun, volunteering is also hugely rewarding. Sue continued, "Selling books and media is a key income stream and the money we generate makes such a difference. However, we can only do it with the help and support of volunteers and the community." The Book Shop is run from EACH's Retail Distribution Centre (RDC), in Brunel Way, Thetford. Volunteers would be asked to unpack and organise boxes of donated books, including sorting them and checking their suggested price online. Profitable books are then listed for sale and sent to customers. Others might be sold in the charity's many book rooms and even those worth little can be pulped and generate recycling income – at the same time saving them being sent to landfill. The scheme usually generates more than £1000 a week and, typically, there are around 2500 books on the EACH account. "I'm in desperate need of extra volunteers and poster campaigns have drawn a blank," added Sue. "Two of my three regulars are leaving for full-time work and I'd be delighted to hear from anyone willing to join me and get involved. It would be ideal for anyone of any age, including students fresh out of school or university. It's a chance to pick up new skills, make friends and get a taste for doing something completely different. Others have described it as a brilliant experience."

To find out more about volunteering in the book shop, contact Sue via:

susan.nettleingham@each.org.uk

Or contact her at EACH RDC on 01842 821620



Sue with some of the stock at EACH Book Shop

Meanwhile, more volunteers are needed to help in the main warehouse at EACH RDC with the sorting and storing of donated goods. The team sort and process all donations and then distribute them to EACH's 47 shops across East Anglia. One of the roles includes being a 'driver's mate', with duties including loading and unloading vans.

To find out more about volunteering opportunities at EACH RDC, email Warehouse Operations and Supply Chain Manager Stephen Ball via:

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Marham Visit For Probus

Thetford Probus Club members visited RAF Marham in August on a prearranged tour. The host, Mo Howard, Station Engagement Officer started the tour with a briefing on the F-35B Lightning Fighter which was exceptionally interesting in particular the advance technology that fifth generation fighters are now equipped with in fulfilling their operations. The next stage of the tour was a guided tour of the Heritage Centre by Steve Roberts, the Curator and ex aircrew Ken Delve. This was not only of considerable interest but also contained entertaining and amusing anecdotes from past operations. The displays and photographs provided insights into the history of the operational life at Marham. The history covered the night battle against German Zeppelin airships in 1916 to the recent Tornado operations from the Gulf to Afghanistan.



Probus members on their visit to RAF Marham

The tour concluded with a coach trip around the base which was highly informative and highlighted the exceptional size and extent of the operations at the base. All of the Probus members thoroughly enjoyed the four hours of the tour and expressed their thanks for the itinerary that was put together by Mo Howard. The photograph is of the Probus Club members with a Tornado aircraft in the background.

If you are interested in joining Probus, please visit the website which provides information on meetings, events and lunches and complete the contact page for joining instructions. The website details are: www.probusclub.net/Thetford

The deadline for the October edition of About Thetford magazine is 15th September. Please send your contribution via email to: karen@aboutthetfordmagazine.co.uk

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Thetford u3a

July saw Jo Daffin not only talk about her bird rescue sanctuary, *The Phoenix Owls* but also bring along four of her birds to show 'on the glove'. Jo rescues wild birds which have been injured but with a lot of TLC can be ultimately returned to the wild. These are kept in aviaries separate from any human intervention as far as possible. The sanctuary is also home to birds rescued which have never known life in the wild, and it was some of these that Jo brought with her.

The first bird to strut his stuff was Weeble – a European Eagle Owl. These are now native to the UK and can expect to live to be sixty years old. Weeble was thirteen years old and weighed five pounds. Skylar, a buzzard was up next, Skylar was rescued from her nest and is blind in one eye so will never be able to hunt in the wild. Skylar was followed by Onion, a long eared owl, who to make himself look bigger pricks up his ears – but still manages to look like an onion! Sadly a lot of these birds are unscrupulously shipped to Japan to be exhibited in tea rooms. Jo's last bird was very undemonstrable, looking rather bored with the proceedings. This was Ethel. Ethel is a tawny frog mouth, she is about the size of a large blackbird but slate grey in appearance with an aggressive scowl which belies her placid nature. Ethel is completely harmless, eats bugs and is related to the nightjar (which incidentally is making an appearance in Thetford). Jo has been running the sanctuary for about ten years and is dedicated to her charges. She has some very long days sometimes being woken in the middle of the night to attend an injured bird.

Finally Jo says if you come across an injured bird and don't know how to deal with it, throw a blanket or similar over it and wrap it around the bird and pick it up from the back.

The speaker for September will be Beverley Beale, talking about Guide Dogs on 28th September at 2pm at The Carnegie. The showing of the film *Belfast* is now confirmed for 11th of this month at 1.30pm at Church On The Way. This is a wonderful film about a youngster growing up in 1950s/60s Belfast. Well worth a watch even if you've already seen it. Tickets are limited so book your seat early Please contact Anne Fabian for tickets.

U3A is always looking for new members so if you know any one who may be interested in the activities, please bring take them along. For more information please contact Lesley on 01842 824074 or www.u3asites.org.uk/thetford



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Thetford Town Council Invests In New Market Co-ordinator

A Norfolk market is to receive a boost after its Town Council decided to invest in a new Market Co-ordinator to support traders.

Thetford is no different to many market towns which have seen their markets reduce in size over the years. A combination of internet shopping and supermarkets have reduced demand but in Thetford, Councillors are determined to do what they can to buck the trend and safeguard the market for future generations.

At its Full Council meeting on Tuesday 25th July 2023, the Council resolved to earmark funds necessary to recruit a new two-day a week market co-ordinator that will support the operation of the market. When not on site, the new co-ordinator will search for new market stalls, encouraging them to come to Thetford and also promote new and existing stalls to the public, to boost trade and improve footfall.

Councillor Terry Land, Chair of the Council's Venues and Communications Committee said; "The new council, post May, is determined to do whatever we can to support the market. This new role will be key to this, acting as the main point of



Meadow Market - available on Saturdays at Thetford Market

contact between market traders and the Council. We already have some fantastic stalls on the market that we want to better support and promote as well as improve efforts to attract new traders to the town. The success of the market also relies on local people purchasing products from traders and I would certainly encourage people to make the most of the stalls that we already have".

For more information about Thetford Market, including information about pitch fees, please contact the Council on 01842 754247 or email:

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Pilot Fund For New Ideas To Inspire People To Use Their Local Town

A £5,000 Love Your Market Town pilot fund is offering grants of up to £1,000 to Breckland-based organisations and groups who implement new initiatives to generate footfall and increase activity in their local towns. The pilot scheme will fund projects that encourage Norfolk residents to use their local market towns more frequently, thanks to the district council and Norfolk County Council.

A series of 'Dragons Den' style competitions will be held in autumn 2023, where local groups or businesses can present ideas to a panel to ask for a share of the funding. Businesses and community groups have until Friday 22nd September to submit their expressions of interest.

Cllr Fabian Eagle, Norfolk County Council Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, said: "I am passionate about how great our market towns are, and how important they are to our local economy. This pilot scheme asks local businesses and groups to develop new ideas to give local residents a great reason to visit their town centres. If successful, it's something we're hoping to expand to other districts in Norfolk".



Cllr Paul Claussen, Breckland District Council's Executive Member for Economic Development and Growth, commented: "I can't wait to hear people's ideas about how we can make our towns even better for our residents, attract more people to Breckland, boost our town centres and support the district to thrive."

Applications are welcome from any local groups or business, but any activity must be a brand-new idea and should support multiple areas or services within a Breckland market town. There is no limit to the kind of activities that can be funded but the idea must have a link to creating interest or increasing footfall in town centres.

For more information, and to express interest in bidding for a grant, please visit:

www.breckland.gov.uk/LoveYourMarketTown

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In the salon we use several advanced techniques using electrical devices, our facials can include, radio frequency, magnetic pulse, galvanic, high frequency, micro-current and intense pulse light. Often to get the best results our clients may need a combination of different treatments. My best advice is to come into the salon, either have a chat with the receptionist or book a skincare treatment such as a facial for starters where we can analyse the skin, talk about what the client would like to achieve and work out a plan to get the best possible results. Some treatments, such as pigmentation removal do require a consultation and patch test prior to starting a treatment. They may only require 1-3 session, whereas other treatments such as the caci and the venus need to be carried out once a week for approximately 6-8 weeks. Certain medications our client is taking may restrict our choice of equipment but as we have such an array to choose from we will definitely have something to help. For any of your skincare needs please feel free to contact the salon, either in person or online and have a look at our website.

Lisa Stallings, Halcyon Days

The deadline for inclusion in the October edition of About Thetford magazine is 15th September.

Please send your contribution via email to:
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Thetford Players Summer Show

The Thetford Players recently played tribute to their Lifelong President Keith Eldred, who passed away earlier this year, with their latest performance. The cast of *Blue Remembered Hills* gave an astounding performance with excellent characterisation and captivating storytelling. The individual characters personalities were completely believable, drawing the audience in to the wartime storyline with ease, and painting a realistic picture from a child's perspective with the support of an exceptional stage set and realistically made props. Scripted emotive subjects were directed by Adam Bond tactfully and acted by the cast with such integrity and compassion it created a powerful and memorable performance. The emotional last scene ended with a poem being read by the actors leaving behind their child like personas. An overall poignant and moving play that will leave an impressive, lasting impression on the audience.



The Showcase was an eclectic mix for the second half of the evening with sketches, singing and comedy. Mark Jefferies compered the evening, adding his personal memories of Keith.



**The cast of Blue Remembered Hills
Left: Keith Eldred**

A rousing group number began the fun with a rare, beautiful solo from the Players Chairman, Jo Cooper. Stand out moments included performances from Charley in her solo and within the group Edenvell along with Nadia and Nina. There was a cleverly created sketch using the lyrics of the song, *Leader of the pack* with the actors playing OAPs and an outstanding version of *Ex-Wives* from *SIX* had the audience clapping and joining in along with their final full cast performance of *We go together* from *Grease*.

To close the show Mayor, Cllr Stuart Wright appeared on stage where he shared his memories of Keith and explained his and Keith's connection to the Players, highlighting Keith's influence and guidance through the years.

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Dancers Debut With The English Youth Ballet

Four students from a Thetford dance school were given the opportunity of a lifetime, performing with the English Youth Ballet at the Theatre Royal Norwich recently. Alice Parker aged 15, Jessica Smith aged 11, Lottie Rogers aged 11 and Sarah Rolph aged 14 are all students at Centre Stage Dance School in Thetford. When their teacher Nicole Cottee asked the girls if they'd like to audition for the latest EYB performance of *Swan Lake*, they jumped at the chance. "Auditions are open to everyone, but you have to be able to dance at a certain level to take part," explained Lottie. The girls competed against approximately 150 dancers to be part of a cast of 90 from across East Anglia with rehearsals held in Norwich.

The ballet is part of a touring show covering the country with students as supporting dancers alongside a professional cast. For Alice, Jessica, Lottie and Sarah it was the most exciting three performances of their lives. Alice, who performed as one of the swans, said for her it was a real change from her normal performances, "It was amazing to be in a professional show. The best thing was how much we improved because we were working with the professionals and put in so many hours." It was also the first time that Alice performed 'en pointe' with only five months of experience. Jessica was thrilled to be cast as a lady-in-waiting, as like Sarah she had to wait for a call back. "I was really excited and so happy when the call came. Being able to dance on a proper stage in a theatre, with professional dancers and loads of people watching was my best thing" she said. Sarah who was cast as a Little Marinsky, admitted to being thrilled but nervous, saying that she would love to do it all again. "It all came together really quickly, you do have some pressure to do it right, it's the most I've ever used my brain!" For Lottie, also cast as a Little Marinsky, her highlight was being taught by the Principals and then dancing on stage with them.

With only three weeks of rehearsals before the show, alongside school and their normal dance classes the schedule was hectic, but plenty of new friendships were made and the icing on the cake was being able to wear professional



Lottie, Alice, Jessica and Sarah prepare to go on stage at the Theatre Royal Norwich



costumes, described as being "so beautiful" by the girls. The girls were supported by their very proud family and friends, and their fellow dance school students who were very excited to see the girls on stage. Charlotte, Jessie's mum said, "It's just been such a special time. I'm so happy that they all had the opportunity to take part. The opportunities for them have been amazing, all the mums helped share the load." Lottie's mum Anna continued, "I'm extremely proud of the dedication that all the students showed, and for Centre Stage getting them so far, so they could take part. They've had to work together and individually, so learnt lots of life lessons that they can take forward."

All four girls attend multiple classes each week and compete regularly in competitions. The EYB programme is biannual and all four hope to audition for the next show. Before that they are looking forward to performing at Disneyland Paris with Centre Stage Dance School in 2025 again.

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Burrell Centre Busier Than Ever

The month of August is normally at least a little bit quieter at the Charles Burrell Centre, but not so this year! The Centre had its busiest summer ever with a whole range of activities taking place.

The Centre was pleased to play host to the Norfolk County Council summer holiday activity scheme and welcomed Norwich City Football Club for a while, providing activities for children during August. Many CBC tenants also ran their own activities with Traquinas and Polish Language School providing welcome support for families.



Anglia In Bloom judges talk to Darren White from CBC during their visit to the town

The Burrell Shop also recorded its busiest week ever during August. East Anglia's first social supermarket has now more than 750 members, reflecting the ongoing cost of living crisis and financial pressures for families. Membership is open to anyone in Thetford and costs just £3.50. Once a member you have access to heavily discounted items in the shop as well as advice and support from shop staff and volunteers. If you're on a pre-payment meter for your gas and electric and struggling to make ends meet, ask them about the Fuel Bank that may be able to assist you.

Another form of useful support at the Centre is provided by Barclays bank. Ever since the branch closed in the town centre, Barclays have been running a pop up every Tuesday in the Engine Room Cafe. Whilst they don't handle cash, they can help with all other account issues including online banking queries. You don't have to have any appointment either, but they can get busy so you may need to sit and wait. They've also run some useful sessions on spotting and tackling fraud issues alongside Norfolk Police. Speaking of the Cafe, there will be a new menu launched from September. The Engine Room will be open from



10am - 2pm, Monday to Friday from Tuesday 5th September. The Centre is currently home to sixty five tenants - the most ever!

There's not many rooms left to rent but it is always worth making an enquiry and joining the waiting list if you are interested. Sessional hire too is very popular. Get in touch with Joanne if you are interested in hiring a room at CBC - all training room sized rooms are priced at just £16 per hour. With ample free parking on site and the option to use the Engine Room based at the Centre for catering services, the Centre provides an attractive offer for would be hirers. Joanne can be contacted on 01842 779867. Details of tenants and sessional hirers can be found on the website:

www.charlesburrellcentre.org.uk

Lastly, CBC are looking forward to a number of cooking classes in September using the Burrell Kitchen. These will be for a mixture of ages plus sessions for mums and dads and older residents. So if you're new to cooking, or just want to learn new skills, get in touch to register your interest now. You can either pop in and speak to a member of staff, give us a call or drop us an email:

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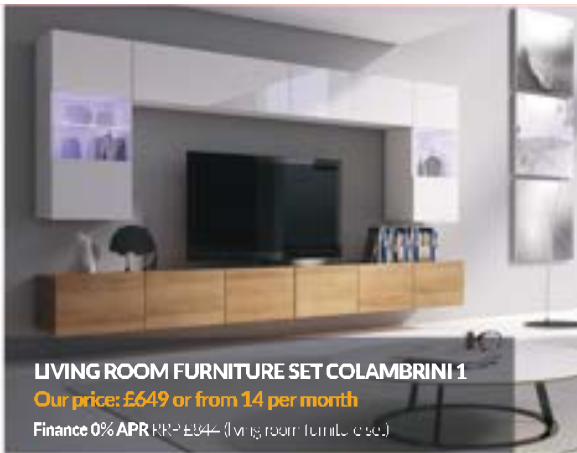
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